A
Research Proposal
For
Admission to Ph. D. in English

SWAMI RAMANAND TEERTH MARATHWADA UNIVERSITY, NANDED

TRAUMA, IDENTITY CRISIS AND NATURE OF HUMAN EXISTENCE IN LUIGI PIRANDELLO'S SELECT PLAYS

Submitted to
Department of English
The Faculty of Arts

Swami Ramannd Teerth Marathwada
University, Nanded

Research Scholar
Poplai Narayan Bharat
Assistant Teacher
Zilla Parishd Primary School, Rudrawadi
Tq. Udgir Dist. Latur

Mob: 9403536636, Email: narayanpoplai@gmail.com

Research Supervisor
Dr. Gore Vitthal Gangadharrao
M. A., M.Phil., Ph.D.
Head, Dept. of English, Shri Havagiswami Mahavidhalaya, Udgir.
Dist. Latur (M. S.) 413517

Mob: 9604304973, Email: dr.vithalgore@gmail.com

Research Center
P. G. Department and Research Center in English,
M.G. College, Ahmedpur,
Dist. Latur (M.S.) 413515

November 2017

TRAUMA, IDENTITY CRISIS AND NATURE OF HUMAN EXISTENCE IN LUIGI PIRANDELLO'S SELECT PLAYS

Introduction

Luigi Pirandello (1867-1936) is an Italian short story writer, novelist and dramatist and Nobel Laureate in Literature (1934). He rejuvenated twentieth-century theatre with his extraordinary gift of translating abstract ideas of philosophical concepts into the visual, human and dramatic. Philosophical and psychological ideas have been enacted in his theatre through his plays. Once he stated, "manifestation of pain is my theatre". Pirandello is a dramatist of great insight who analyzed the human experience on philosophical and psychological horizons, his representation of human psyche is of absolute excellence. The condition of human phenomenon of modern man is presented in his plays on surrealistic level. He denied the artistic notions of naturalism, and focused attention on inner realities of human being. Human condition is not concrete and constant, it is always in flux. True nature of human existence is presented through his plays, insecurity of the modern life and its impact on human behavior is rightly presented by Pirandello in this way the issues raised by him are found relevant today.

Significance of the study

Luigi Pirandello is a dramatist who explored the topic of reality of human life and its experiences, what we experience in everyday life is surface reality but the inner psychic reality which is quiet vast than surface reality, this inner reality of human existence is opened by Pirandello, its easy to watch faces in the mirror but the genuine image that of mind and emotions is shown by the plays which are selected for research Pirandello revolted against the norms of conventional theatre and established new style of metatheatre, which expressed metareality on the stage.

The present research in meant to explore the nature of human existence of the characters of the plays. The analysis of the human phenomenon will be done by using the tenets of existentialism. The analysis of freedom, choice, authenticity, alienation and rebellion will be done with the help of catheterization of the plays.

In today's world the purity of emotions is no more there, unauthentic expression and self, deceiving tendencies are increased and it affected the form of love, and sympathy.

Hence it is necessary and relevant that nature of human existence should be understood on deeper levels.

Present contemporary scenario is such that false self image is being formed by human being and he is getting away from reality the authentic aspect of honesty is losing day by day. Because of mall emotional hurts too, getting converted in trauma. Today the panic situations are increasing man is losing patience, dissatisfactory traumatic conditions are increasing. To overcome this situation there is need of such studies which will critically analyze the traumatic conditions of human being. This all should be overcomed with patience and peace of mind, remedies to this should be found out.

Along with this present research is intended to study the role of memory in construction of self, the self is the image of a person in his own eyes. Crisis of self-identity is strong theme in Pirandello's plays, the healthy construction of self can help to overcome the traumatic condition.

Hence, the present study is relevant and significant; an attempt will be made to undertake a detail study and analysis of human existence to overcome the traumatic human condition.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

- To study the nature of human existence represented in Luigi Pirandello's selected plays from existential point of view
- To analyze the trauma of the characters in the plays
- To study the identity crisis represented in the plays
- To study the role of memory in construction of the 'self '

Hypothesis

1) Existential themes are dominant in Luigi Pirandello's plays
2) Antithetical nature of truth and existence is represented through the plays
3) Search for identity is a promising theme in the plays
4) Memory and madness are significant traits of the characters in the plays.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

Scope of the present study is limited to the selected plays of Luigi Pirandello. The present study is focusing on the nature of human existence as appeared in these plays. Analysis of human trauma of the characters in these plays will be done, and the tools used to analyze trauma could be used for any character analysis from any literary works. Further this study is intended to study the existential survival of the characters in the plays, and the concept of existential survival could be applied for any character analysis from any work of literature. The proposed study revolves around the analysis of human trauma and its existence in the light of existentialist approach to the reading and understanding of different aspects of the characters of selected plays. Existentialism is a highly developed branch of philosophical knowledge. However, it is not possible to consider every existential aspect in this investigation, so it is restricted up to analysis of existential dimensions of the characters. Existential criticism has its own merits and demerits. It is highly difficult to come down to the specific generalization about the different characters. In one or another way the human emotions and the feelings are the same hence scope for character analysis is immense as far as the present research is concerned.

A Review of the Selected Plays

1) Right Your Are (If You Think So) (1918)

The story of the play is about the characters each of whom claims the other is insane. Mr. Ponza, son-in-law of Lady Flora escape to provincial town after disastrous earthquake in Morsica it is rumoured that Ponza is married but no one has ever seen Ponza's wife the couple stays on the top floor in nearby block, and the lady Flora lives in luxurious apartment these persons became subject of many rumors. The people of the town are suspicious when they discover that Mr. Ponza never allows the two women to see each other, and finally they insist on an explanation Mr. Ponza gives it. His mother-in-law, he says, is mad she thinks that the woman he is married to is her daughter but her daughter was his first wife who was killed in an earthquake and to prevent her from being forced to realize this, he allows her this harmless delusion, and keeps her wife away from his wife. Mother-in-law has her own explanation: it is her son-in-law who is mad; he imagines his wife was killed, but of course she wasn't, he is still married to her, and the old lady submits to being separated from her daughter, just to humour him. The wife herself is questioned. The truth, she says, is this "I am the daughter of Signora Flora and second wife Mr. Ponza as for myself, I am nothing. I am-whatever you chore to have me"

2) *Six Characters in Search of an Author(1921)*

The play is innovative and unconventional, the characterization and the plot surprises the readers and audience. Pirandello presented theatre as symbol of actual reality and the actual world as theatrical reality and the human beings as characters of the play. In the opening of *'Six Characters in Search of an Author',* the scene of rehearsal goes on the stage and suddenly six persons from the audience interrupt the play, claiming that they are characters of the play and their author kept them unfinished, hence they want to act their roles on the stage. Six characters start enacting their roles on the stage to finish their story.

Pirandello symbolically represents these characters as actual human beings it causes the semblance of illusion and reality, by doing this Pirandello is questioning the 'authenticity' of human existence and devaluing the feature of singularity and concreteness of human life. The play convert auditorium into the stage and the stage into auditorium. This act of the playwright erodes the line of difference between life and the drama, the chaotic nature of reality and the human existence is being effectively presented through this play, Pirandello is an excellent master in theatrical experimentation, his preoccupation with theater in theater is a powerful subversion of the conventional plays.

3) *Henry IV (1922)*

Henry IV could be called 'modern tragedy' it is quite different from the conventional tragedies and the nations of Aristotelian tragedy does not fit to this play. Henry is a man who went mad while playing the role of the king Henry IV of German medieval history. The illusion of becoming king continues in his madness. His daughter calls doctor for psychotherapy to heal the madman to keep his illusion, his daughter manages all the arrangements. The hero of the play Henry IV the king in illusion continues his life as king. After few years later he came to sanity but didn't tell it to anyone up to eight years and continue his madness.

Henry IV's madness and sudden loss of memory is a rejection to reality to create his own subjective reality. Henry's unconscious dream to become a king is fulfilled by his madness. This state of insanity provides Henry a comfort zone in which the restrictions of morality didn't exist there, as a mad man he earned attention, sympathy, love and care from others. After coming out of his madness he didn't tell others and continues with his insanity is an indication of self denial and revolt against self image. His identity as mad man is more valuable than the normal Henry. This identity crisis converts the general reality into subjective reality in this way Henry ridicules reality.

4) Clothe the Naked (1922)

Pirandello called it 'a tragical face'. The protagonist tries to establish her individuality by assuming various identities, which are successively stripped from her; she gradually realizes her true position in the social order and in the end dies "naked" without a social mask, in both her own and her friend's eyes.

The play is demonstration of the theme of non-existence for subjective human beings. It is a story of pitiful Ersilia Drei, a poor seduced abandoned girl who has been attempted suicide. Ersilia tries to make her identity in the society but every identity which she tries to create has been snatched away by the society. Actually the act of clothing is an act of giving an identity to someone; clothing is symbolically presented as an act of self construction and identity formation. Henry IV was deliberately denying his identity and Ersilia is trying to construct her social image which is again and again rejected by the individuals of the society. Henry tries to create his own illusive, subjective reality and Ersilia tries to socialize herself to become the part of social reality. Rejection of socialization and acceptance of socialization both are not able to give identity to the characters in these plays. The theme of rejection of self and rejection of society come out from these plays, Pirandello put forth the struggle of a girl to create her own identity is delineated through this play.

5) The Man with the Flower in his Mouth (1923)

The play '*The Man with the Flower in his Mouth'* is about the protagonist who is suffering from incurable decease of epithelioma. The dying man defines his life experiences in his last days. The play is a dialogue between two persons, one is dying man another is peaceful businessman. One has no time whose life is on the age of death and another is a businessman who as all luxuries of life and lots of time for himself the contrasting picture of two persons is presented through the play. The fear of death is universal fear for all human beings on the earth. The protagonist is in the mouth of death, anyone in this world cannot stop his death. In such situation he analyses his past experiences, he reviews his beautiful memories of life. Now he thinks most trivial events precious. In the solemnity of solitude he gained new eye to view life. This unexpected awareness enlarges his scope to interpret his existence. The theme of anonymous, barren human life is strongly put forth by Pirandello through his play.

Research Methodology

There are three aspect of methodology, which is required; these are:

1. Data Sources

A) Primary Sources

The primary data sources for the present study are the selected plays written by Luigi Pirandello. The original plays written by the author are available in English. These plays are translations. The translated plays in English are primary sources for the present study.

B) Secondary Sources

1. Books and similar Publications
2. Articles and Print Periodicals
3. Electronic and online resources
4. Media Center
5. Web sources
6. E-books and E-Libraries

2. Methods and Techniques of Collecting Data

The present study will use Library Research Method. The empirical library research would enable the researcher to use primary and secondary sources for colleting relevant data for the study.

3. Methods and Techniques of Analyzing Data

The technique of analyzing data is the process to find and arrange the data systematically, by organizing the data into different categories. The qualitative method will be used to analyze the data.

Scheme of Chapterization

Chapter One: Introduction

In this chapter introduction to the proposed research will be elaborated. Need and significance of the study, aims and objectives, hypothesis and research mythology will be discussed in detail.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

Review of related literature will be done in this chapter. The history of drama, nature of modern plays and the place of Luigi Pirandello as a dramatist will be discussed in detail in this chapter.

Chapter Three: Thematic Concerns of Luigi Pirandello

Major thematic concerns of Luigi Pirandello plays will be discussed in this chapter. Dominant themes like antithetical nature of reality, concept of metatheater, theater of ideas, theatrical experimentations will be discussed in this chapter.

Chapter Four: Trauma and Identity Crisis.

The concept of human trauma will be discussed and an investigation will be carried out to analyze the trauma of the characters from the selected play. Various definitions will be given to clarify the concept of identity crisis and the characters analysis will be done find out the problem of identity crisis of the characters in selected plays.

Chapter Five: Nature of Human Existence

In this chapter the theories of existential philosophy will be discussed. Major notions of existentialism will be considered to analyze the characters from the selected plays. And the concept of nature of human existence will be generalized to unify analysis of the characters.

Chapter Six: Conclusion and Suggestions for Further Study

This chapter makes an effort to conclude the study within the predetermined scope and limitations of the study. The findings of the study will be discussed in detail and an attempt will be made whether the study meets the predetermined objectives and hypothesis, based on various observations, suggestions will be offered for further studies in the research area.

WORKING BIBLIOGRAPHY

A) Primary Sources

Works by Luigi Pirandello

Right You Are If You Think You Are, 1918.

Six Characters in Search of an Author 1921.

Enrico IV, 1922.

Clothe the Naked 1922

The Man with the Flower in his Mouth,1923.

B) Secondary Sources

Aho, K., *Existentialism : An Introduction*, Cambridge : Polity Press 2014.

Bentley, Eric. *The Playwright as Thinker :A Study of Drama in Modern Times. 8th ed.* Cleveland and New York, 1963

Bloom, Harold. Ed., *Luigi Pirandello, Modern Critical Views.* Chelsea House Publishers, 1989.

Chambon, Glauco, ed. *Pirandello, a Collection of Critical Essays, in the series Twentieth Century Views*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1967

Caputi, Anthony Francis. *Pirandello and theCrisis of Modern Consciousness.* Urbana: Univ, off Ill. Press, 1988.

Crowell, S. *The Cambridge Companion to Existentialism*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press 2012.

DiGaetani, J. L. (ed.) *A Companion to Pirandello Studies*. Greenwood Press, 1991.

Erikson, Erik .*Identity Crisis in Autobiographic Perspective,* Daedalus the Making of Modern science Biographical studies : 730-759 (Fall 1970).

Gilman, Richard. *The Theatre of Yesterday and Tomorrow: commedia dell'arte on the Modern Stage.* Lewiston: E. Mellen Press, 1992.

Gilman, Richard. *The Making of Modern Drama: A study of Buchner; Ibsen, Strindberg, Chekhov, Pirandello, Brecht, Beckett, Handke*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Girous, 1974.

Giudice, Gaspare. *Pirandello: A Biography*. Trans. A. Hamilton. London: Oxford University Press, 1975.

Gruber, Wm. E. *Missing Persons: Character and Characterization in Modern Darama.* Athens, GA. University of GA Press, 1994.

Gunsberg, Maggie. *Gender and the Italian Stage: From the renaissance to the Present Day.* Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Jon G. Allen. *Coping with Trauma : Hope Through Understanding*. American Psychiatric Pub. 2008.

MacClintock, L. *The Age of Pirandello.* Indiana University Press, 1951.

Newberry, Wilma. *The Pirandellian Mode in Spanish Literature*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1973.

Oliver, Roger W. *Dreams of Pasion: The Theater of Luigi Pirandello*. Gotham Library of NY Univ. Press, 1979.

Paolucci, Anne. *Pirandello's Theater, the Recovery of the Modern Satge for Dramatic Art.* Carbondale; Southern Illinois University Press, 1974.

Ragusa, Olga. *Luigi Pirandello*. New York :Columbaiauniv. Press, 1968.

_____, *Luigi Pirandello: an approach to his theater*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1980.

Witt, Mary Ann Frese. *The Search for Modern Tragedy: Aesthetic fascism in Italy and France.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001.

Research Scholar
Poplai Narayan Bharat
M.A., M.Ed., NET
Assistant Teacher
Zilla Parishd Primary School, Rudrawadi
Tq. Udgir Dist. Latur

Research Supervisor
Dr. Gore Vitthal Gangadharrao
M. A., M.Phil., Ph.D.
Head, Dept. of English,
Shri Havagiswami Mahavidhalaya, Udgir.
Dist. Latur (M. S.) 413517

Research Center
P. G. Department and Research Center in English,
M. G. College, Ahmedpur,
Dist. Latur (M. S.) 413515